Quote Integration and the Basics of MLA in-text Citation

**When you should use a quote:**

-When the author says something better and more clearly than you can/when it’s the author’s idea, not yours.

-When you are analyzing SPECIFIC WORDS from the text/source.

-When you need EVIDENCE to support your argument.

**How you should use a quote:**

-Your quote should almost never be longer than a SINGLE LINE. Otherwise, you are better off paraphrasing.

-Sentences should include BOTH your own thoughts and your quote. A sentence should never be a quote BY ITSELF. If I wanted to read the entire book/source I would have. I want to YOUR thoughts.

**The Three ways to Integrate a Quote:**

1. Your own words: “Quote” (citation).
2. “Quote” (citation), your own words.
3. Your words, “Quote” (citation), your words
4. When the quote is the final part of your sentence, you can introduce the quote one of three ways: with a signal phrase like he says, or she says; with a colon (:); or as an extension of your own words.
* He says/She says: Atticus metaphorically explains the reason people should leave Boo Radley alone when he says, “remember it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird” (Lee 86).

* Colon: Atticus metaphorically explains why a man like Boo Radley should be left alone: “it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird” (Lee 86).

* Extension of your own words: The children learn to leave Boo Radley alone due to their father’s lesson that “it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird” (Lee 86).

1. When the quote is the first part of your sentence, you must make sure to blend it with your own words. When you use this technique, the citation is at the end of that phrase (not necessarily the end of the sentence; just the first punctuation after the quote ends). Again, you can integrate the quote as an extension of you own words, with a comma, or with a colon. Typically, this technique is used with a quote also begins a sentence.

* Your own words: “Standing on the Radley porch was enough” for Scout to fully empathize with Boo’s position within her own life (Lee 234).

* Comma: “Standing on the Radley porch was enough” (Lee 234), both as an epiphany and as a realization of a childhood goal, for Scout to fully empathize with Boo’s position within her own life.

* Colon: “Standing on the Radley porch was enough” (Lee 234): Scout now has attained the empathy for Boo’s position that she lacked throughout the text.

1. Placing a quote in the middle of a sentence is usually achieved through commas, or a combination of commas and extending your own words. Thus the techniques of the first two points are present. The parenthetical citation is once again at the end of the phrase.

* Commas: When Scout says, “Boo’s children needed him” (Lee 233), she ultimately gives Boo the responsibility for her welfare.

* Extending your words (initially): Because Scout acknowledges that “Boo’s children needed him” (Lee 233), she ultimately gives Boo the responsibility for her welfare.
* Extending your words (ultimately): As Scout says, “Boo’s children needed him” to take on the responsibility of their welfare (Lee 233).

* Extending your own words (both places) Scout’s acknowledgement that “Boo’s children needed him” reveals that she ultimately gives Boo the responsibility for her welfare (Lee 233).

**Modifying a Quote:**

-If pronouns in a quote are unclear (he, her, them, etc), you may add identification in your quote. Just insert brackets so that we know what you have added.

“If it would please her [Janet], I would propose immediately” (Ski 1).

-If you are quoting dialogue within your quote, use single quotation marks to denote it.

“When Jake said ‘I have a great idea,’ we all knew trouble was coming” (Ski 1).

**Citing a Quote in-text:**

-“Quote” (author’s last name page number). 🡨 N.B. There is no punctuation INSIDE the quote

“Roses are red and violets are blue” (Ski 2).

-The only time punctuation is at the end of the quote is when a question mark or an exclamation point is present:

 1) When Susie says, “I’m so glad you came!” she reveals her excitement (Ski 2).

 2) When Susie asks, “Why didn’t you come?” she reveals her bewilderment (Ski 2).

-If you use the author’s/source’s name in the quote, you can just include the page number in your citation.

 “As Ski makes clear, “Roses are red and violets are blue” (2).

**Next-Level Integration:**

-Alternatives for He says/She says/the character says/the author says:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| acknowledges adds admits agrees argues asserts believes claims concedes  | concludes comments compares demonstrates deniesdescribes emphasizes explains expresses  | illustrates implies insists notes maintains observes points out proposes proves  | rejects remarks responds reasons saysshows states suggests writes  |

**-Do not waste space saying things like:**

 -“in the book My Big Boring Academic Study, by Professor H. Pompous Windbag III, it says” or “the following quote by a government study shows that…” or “the previously mentioned quote,” or “and now, a quote.”

**I will just cross it out, and it will make me angry.**